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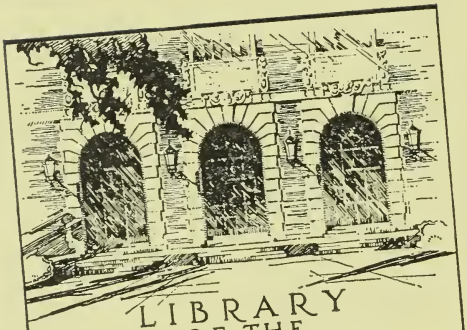
THE MENNONITES OF WALDO, 1860-1960.



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THE MENNONITES OF WALDO

1860--1960

By Edwin J. Stalter

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MENNONITES AT WALDO

1860-1960

The Land Where They Arrived

One-hundred years ago, the country side of our area was a vast prairie. Very few had yet settled on the land. Natural drainage only, existed. Sloughs and ponds were prevalent. Wild prairie grass grew extensively. "Deer, prairie wolves, sandhill cranes, wild geese, ducks and prairie chickens were in abundance. These were a problem to the early farmer settlers." [1]

The early settlers of Central Illinois lived first along the rivers and streams. The wooded areas provided fuel, water, and protection from the elements. The land also was considered very hard and it took six yoke of oxen to pull the plow. "The early Mennonites settled first on the banks of the Illinois River in the Peoria region. From here the newcomers settled along the tributaries of the Illinois, the Bureau, Partridge, and Ten Mile Creeks, the Mackinaw River and its branches, Dillion and Rock Creeks." [2]

The building of the Illinois Central Railroad with other factors helped tremendously to attract people out of the woods and on to the Prairie. The Peoria and Oquakwa Railroad sent the first passenger train through Gridley on February 28, 1857. Gradually the farms spread into the prairie land. The prairies held unique problems. The tall prairie grass made traveling difficult as no trail was left. The farmer desiring to journey to a town, it was said would sometimes drag a harrow so as to leave a trail that he might find his way home again. "An early traveler said that there wasn't a road or sign of one — not a trail or path." Travel was made in as straight a line as possible, but the sloughs caused occasionally diverging. If the landmarks could not be seen, travel was by the sun during the day and by the North Star at night. If the sun was hidden by the clouds, the wind direction was used as a guide. The wind very seldom failed to be perceptible, if ever so slight. Many sloughs were in the area and in winter these would freeze. When these sloughs and ponds were frozen, crossing them even with a team and wagon was easy. When this was not the case, and the ice rather thin, the common mode of crossing was for the individual to get down on hands and feet, spread himself as much as possible and "wobble" across in this style. To one unaccustomed to this, the situation was not very agreeable, and if the ice was thin enough to be continually cracking and bending beneath him, the sensations were not at all assuring." [3] The sloughs and ponds were the cause of many diseases.

Draining the land was the number one problem for effective settlement. In the Gridley area, mole drains were considerably used, but they proved unsatisfactory and were succeeded by open ditches. Tile was the method that eventually solved the drainage problem. While it was formerly believed that the wild prairie would never be inhabited, yet agriculture in this area was to become a great success and in the region some of the best farming land in the world. In 1857 the land price was generally $14 an acre but it was later reduced to $6 and $7 per acre.

"The early Illinois Amish settlers lived a very simple life. They lived largely on game, milk, and cornflour. They made their own shoes and clothes. They lived in log cabins where oiled paper served as windows and a ladder was used to go to bed in the loft. Often these cabins had no other floor than the ground." [4] The Mennonites had come from Europe because of economic, political and religious oppression and were willing to make many sacrifices.

The People From Which They Came

The origin of the Mennonite Church had its dawning during the period of the Great Reformation. While Martin Luther and Ulrich Qwingli departed radically from traditional Catholicism, the group we call the Swiss Brethren deviated still further. "This 'Swiss Brethren movement' commonly called Anabaptism and later known as Mennonites was formerly initiated on January 21, 1525 in the city of Zurich, Switzerland or the nearby village of Zollilson. In a prayer service on that night, a company of about fifteen earnest Christians, were led by what they were convinced was a Divine call to establish a brotherhood of believers under the outward sign of adult baptism as a confession of faith and a pledge to live a true Christian life. Conrad Grebel, 1498-1526 is acknowledged as the leader of this group." [5]

"One of the most characteristic features of Anabaptism is its church concept." [6] "The distinctive Anabaptist tenets were: A voluntary church of believers only, with baptism of adults on confession of faith and commitment to discipleship; separation of church and state; full liberty of conscience; holiness of life in full obedience to Christ; noncomformity to the world; a love-ethic including nonresistance and total rejection of warfare and the use of force; a brotherhood type of church with mutual aid; nonswearing of oathes; literal obedience to the Sermon on the Mount and the other teachings of Jesus; and simplicity of life and dress." [7]

The early Brethren were very zealous in their missionary endeavors and many joined their ranks. The government tried in vain to stop this movement. "Imprisonment, exile, fire and torture did not curtail its spread." [8] Then the death penalty was inflicted. Still the group expanded despite the numerous folk who were martyred. The Brethren faith spread into Holland. Here Menno Simmons was baptized into the fellowship in 1536. This man was a great leader and his influence inside its ranks so great that the name Menist, and later Mennonites was attached to the Brethren Movement. "Menno Simmons witnessed the growth of the church from small beginnings to a membership of many thousands." [9]

In about the year 1693, 168 years after the beginning of the Mennonite Church a major split in Switzerland occurred when a prominent bishop, Jacob Ammon was separated from the brethren on the issue of avoidance and became known as Amish Mennonites. Soon after this, members of the followers of Ammon, began to emigrate to America. It wasn't, however, until 1832 that the great migration to Central Illinois began. "From 1832 to 1850 most of the Amish came. Most of the settlers along the Illinois River and Woodford and Tazewell counties came directly from Alsace Lorraine. From the eastern United States also interest developed in Illinois. This Western land was advertised very freely in the East. Pamphlets were circulated in the eastern states about the great resources of the Middle West. The earliest pioneers also wrote back to their friends both in America and Europe inviting them to come. By 1840 the rush for Illinois was on. Some came on horseback, some on foot, some with ox teams." [10]

The Historicity of the Church

About 1860 the German Mennonites began to arrive in the Waldo Township area. A history written in 1878 says of the early Mennonites: "These people are exceedingly simple in their habits and dress and will not sue or be sued, leave all difficulties to be adjusted by the church, adopt the Bible as their only rule of law or doctrine and seldom if ever contract any debts or hold any office. They own some fine farms and seem to improve them on the principle that a good barn will pay for a good house but a good house will not pay for a good barn." [11] A church was organized very shortly after the Mennonites arrival in

Waldo Township. Evidently several years elapsed after the coming of the first Mennonites until a sufficient number settled to necessitate the formation of a church. In 1860 Christian Ropp, of the old Mackinaw Congregation and a pioneer minister and bishop helped initiate the beginnings of the Waldo congregation. "At the organization meeting, John P. Schmitt, Joseph Joab, and John Rediger were chosen and acted as leaders." [12] The first Mennonite minister and also one of the early settlers was Jacob Rediger, but he soon died. John P. Schmitt moved into the area about 1860 and served as minister of the church for over forty years. His death occurred in 1904. This man possessed a very friendly disposition, and served as a good minister and pastor. Christian Slagel, 1810-1884, moved also at an early date into the Waldo area in 1862 or 1863. He had been ordained prior to his coming. In 1835 he with his father, emigrated to the Amish Mennonite settlement on Ten Mile Creek. Christian Slagel was ordained to the office of Bishop of the Waldo Mennonite Congregation in 1872. Christian Slagel passed to his eternal reward in 1884. Joseph Rediger came to Gridley, Illinois in 1859 and was chosen a minister in 1863. He later was one of the founders of the Defenseless Mennonite Church in 1866. This was the second Mennonite group to be organized in Waldo township. "Jacob Wagler (1806-1872) was also one of the early ministers. Three weeks before his death, his wife was so sick that she was not expected to live. At this he was much grieved and frequently expressed a desire to go first, saying that he was ready, and had a desire to be with Jesus. After an illness of nine days, he went to be with his Saviour." [13] Following the death of Bishop Christian Slagel, Daniel Steinman (1830-1916) became Bishop in 1885 or 1886. He was first ordained to the ministry in 1872. Daniel Steinman fulfilled his ordination vows with the best of his ability. On April 5, 1908 he preached his farewell sermon and moved to Iowa to make his home. Another prominent minister of this time was Dan Orendorff, (1848-1918). His ordination took place in 1890 and he served henceforth for over a quarter of a century. "He was considered a substantial worker, in conference and wherever his voice was heard." [14] One of the fine characteristics of this minister was the missionary convictions he possessed. This influence was imparted to the congregation. A diary of his travels and sermon texts is still extant today. Other ministers about this time in the church were John Albrecht (1833-1900), C. C. Zimmerman, Valentine Neuhauser, Joseph Ackerman, and Joseph Unzicker. It was customary to have a number of ordained men in the church and the "Amen bench" on the side of the pulpit was sometimes full of ministers and deacons. In addition to the main sermon, a number of testimonies were given to the message. A diary of a traveling school teacher speaks of a message 5½ hours long by his friend Schmidt at Waldo. He felt this was too long. The early preaching was mostly developed at church and not from a manuscript or notes. Following the moving of Daniel Steinman to Iowa, George Summers, (1871-1937) was ordained to the office of Bishop in 1908. He served in this capacity for several years and then asked to be relieved. The congregation granted the request but he continued to serve as a minister until a few years later when he and his family accompanied a number of other Mennonite families to Ashley, Michigan, where he organized a congregation which has since enjoyed a steady growth. Another long and faithful ministry in the church was that of Daniel Slagel (1864-1947) who was the son of the first resident bishop, Christian Slagel. Daniel Slagel was ordained to the ministry on July 3, 1900 and served until his health began to fail in about 1940. Coupling his service with that of his father, credits the Slagel family with many years of service to the Waldo congregation. Edward A. Rediger (1876-1943) was ordained as deacon of the congregation November 1, 1925. He served faithfully until September 1941, when he moved with his family to Hesston, Kansas. He passed away June 24, 1943. During his life, he had read the Bible through 27 times. For a number of years there had been no resident bishop. Bishops serving Waldo during this time were John

Birky of Hopedale, Samuel Gerber, Tremont; and J. S. Shoemaker of Freeport. Joseph D. Hartzler became a minister of the congregation September 15, 1920 and bishop of the church in July 25, 1927. His ministry was a great contribution at a very crucial time. In the year that J. D. Hartzler became a minister of the church, the congregation with other groups in Illinois dropped the name Amish Mennonite to Mennonite with the formation of the Illinois Mennonite Conference. At the coming to Illinois, the Amish Mennonites held the name of Amish but from the beginning a marked difference from the Old Amish group steadily grew. One of the marked emphasis was that of missions, Christian education and a deeper spiritual life.

On December 12, 1948, Edwin J. Stalter was ordained to the ministry to assist J. D. Hartzler. He served as assistant pastor until the time of the retirement of J. D. Hartzler on November 24, 1957 at which time he became pastor of the church.

Physicial Facilities

At first services were held in the homes of the nearest school house. The first building was erected in 1867 where the present church stands. It measured 32' x 48' with one small addition to the rear. The building had permanent wooden seats and was heated by stoves. A small room upstairs was called the Minister's Council room. It was at the south end of the church and had one small window to the south. The room was later discarded when an addition was built on to the north end.

The first trustees were Joseph Gascho, John P. Schmidt, and Christian Slagel. Most of this building was moved to Meadows. In 1903 a new building was constructed and this was remodeled in 1918. John Beller, Joseph Albrecht, and Jacob Yordy were trustees at the time. On August 23, 1933 a fire completely destroyed this building. A new building was erected soon after the fire. The Building committee consisted of Joseph Orendorff, Jacob Dellenbach, Daniel Augsburger, Samuel Albrecht, and William Schertz. The completed structure was dedicated on December 17, 1933. Church services were held at the Methodist Church in Flanagan during this time. In 1958 and 1959 an educational wing was added to the west. Serving on the building committee were Lloyd Zehr, William Yordy, Ed Stalter, Orval Yordy, Homer Springer and Arthur Ringenberg. During the one-hunded years at Waldo Mennonite the following were some of those serving as trustee: Daniel Augsburger, John Beller, Jacob Dellenbach, Joseph Zehr, Will Yordy, Edd Stalter, Arthur Ringenberg, Lloyd Zehr, Noah Yordy, and Joseph Orendorff.

The Development of the Sunday School

"Sunday School began at Waldo in 1868 with the first promoters being Christian Slagel, Joseph Gascho, and Samuel King." [14] Sunday School was held every two weeks with church services meeting in-between. In 1875 the Sunday School was accepted as a part of the regular service. Waldo was one of the first in the state to do this. All of the Sunday School classes were especially for the young, a German School where the German language was taught. The older grandfathers told of their class of boys sitting around the stoves, their faces red and their feet cold, learning to read German with C. C. Sommers as their teacher. The alphabet was taught first out of a small book, then small sentences, finally whole verses, all from the Bible of course, which this small book contained. Gradually after 1900 the school increased with the idea of Bible teaching and less German and the English language replaced the German. However, yet for many years the oldest of the congregation used the German quarterly. Many have been the men who have been superintendent and also

teachers of the school. David D. Zehr, J. D. Conrad, J. D. Hartzler, Joseph Orendorff, Noah Yordy, David Conrad, Lewis Appel, Homer Springer, Milo Zehr, Wilmer Over, Floyd Hartzler, Edwin Stalter, Virgil May, Vernon Ringenberg, Chester Long have been among those as superintendents. The Sunday School has been a means of great helpfulness in acquiring a knowledge of God's Word. The Waldo School has also through the years used the Sunday School offering to great helpfulness to the benevolent causes worldwide for the Glory of Christ.

The Children's Department

The Primary Department was begun in 1910. This has been especially helpful to the boys and girls in getting acquainted with the Bible, memorization of Scripture and spiritual songs, and in a knowledge of right and wrong. Hundreds of children have gone through this school. Leaders who contributed their services to this department have been Edward Yordy, Ada Orendorff, Lydia Smith, Carrie Greiser, Ida Schertz, Beulah Roeschley, Aldine Hartzler, Oleta Hartzler, Evelyn May, Verelda Roth, etc. Edward Yordy spent 22 years in this activity. In 1958 a Children's Activities Committee was formed, consisting of a Superintendent, assistant superintendent and secretary to care for the children's program in the church. In this area comes the Sunday School, Children's Meetings on Sunday evening and Wednesday's Midweek Service, Summer Bible School and assisting also with the Torchbearers and Wayfarers groups.

Related Educational and Worship Meetings

Evening Services have been held at Waldo since shortly after the turn of the century, about 1904. One of the first figures in the starting of this Young Peoples Bible Meeting was John Conrad. Prior to the organization of this type of service, singings were held. Later also it is said that at the Sunday afternoon and evening meetings of "the crowd" as it was designated, there was usually a period of singing. This group of young folks were rarely invited beforehand, that is until after the morning service was dismissed. The Yordys, Schertz, Slagels, Bellers, Stalters and others seemed always to be prepared for from 30-40 guests for Sunday dinner and evening lunch. The Sunday evening services have continued through the years and have been of great benefit to the church. A program committee assists the officers of the meeting in preparation of the services.

Another important and vital activity of the church is the Midweek Bible Study and Prayer Service. J. D. Hartzler started this meeting in his ministry. During this night all members of the family have activities at the church including adults, youth and children. This is a great source of blessing in our age of modernity.

Contribution by the Ladies of the Congregation

The Waldo Mennonite Sewing Circle began soon after 1891. When this circle was started several of the ladies met at each others homes. Among these were Mrs. Daniel Orendorff, Mrs. J. K. Yordy, Mrs. Peter Schertz and Lydia Smith. About 1906 or 1907 Mrs. J. K. Yordy, Mrs. Dan Augsburger, Mrs. Dan Orendorff and Edna Stalter drove a team of horses to Roanoke to acquire organizational material for the Waldo circle. This group only remained until shortly after dinner since a snow storm was threatening. The Chicago Home Mission was one of the first places that benefited from the work of this organization. To the home of the meeting the sewing machines were hauled in and those who did not sew at the machines pieced quilts and quilted them. Comforters were also knotted. Ladies who were unable to attend did their work in their own home. At first the hostess served lunch at noon, but this kept growing into

feasts, so each then brought a dish, and later a sack lunch was voted in. The report from April 1, 1921-April 1, 1922 lists the number of meetings held as twelve. Average attendance was 10, garments made—160, comforters—9, quilts —6, used garments valued at $.75 and money received for home mission work— $95.00. For many years eggs were sent to the Home Mission in Chicago and later to the Peoria Mission. During the winter when eggs were scarce, several members took them to church and filled the twelve dozen case cooperatively. Fruit was sent also each year. Another item of helpfulness was toward the annual Christmas dinner held at the Chicago Home Mission. A. H. Leaman was a frequent visitor and things were sent back with him when he was superintendent of the Mission.

Later contributions were also sent to India. Second-hand clothes were packed in barrels and sent by freight. Sometimes the Home Mission shared these contributions with other missions. In probably the 20's an organization known as the Waldo Willing Workers Sewing Society was formed which was composed of the young ladies of the church. During the years the benevolent assistance given by the ladies has been great. It is impossible to include all the names of the ladies working in this organization but in addition to those already mentioned we might also add Mrs. Noah Yordy, Lydia Smith, Mrs. Edd Rediger, Mrs. Aaron Slagel, Mrs. John Roeschley, Mrs. Edward Eigsti, and Mrs. Ida Posar. During the last few years the organization name has been changed to Women's Missionary and Service Auxiliary, but the same kind of loving assistance is still being given. A Junior Missionary and Service Auxiliary composed of the young girls of the church meets monthly.

Young People's Activities

Young people are always of special interest to any church. An organization that has done much for the youth at Waldo was the Literary Society. This was first organized around 1920. At this meeting Arthur Augsburger was elected president and Emma Roeschley, secretary. This meeting convened at the home of John Roeschley. The following committees were appointed by the president. *Program*: Ada Orendorff, Ida Schertz, Roy Slagell. *Social*: Leo Roeschley, Ella Zehr, Esther Augsburger and Amos Slagell. *Look Out*: Alvin Saltzman, Emery Schrock, Lavina Beller. *Refreshment*: Ida Yoder, Art Guth, Eli Roeschley, and Ella Stalter. The early constitution called for the president and secretary to be elected by the majority of members present. The meetings were to be held the first Wednesday after the first Sunday of each month. Members of the Society registered were Leo Roeschley, Peter Zehr, Lester Saltzman, Emery Schrock, Walter A. Zehr, Amsy D. Yordy, Arthur Stalter, George A. Slagell, Edwin Slagell, Melvin Roeschley, Ray Stalter, Wilbert Stalter, Mollie Schrock, Edna Slagell, Ada Orendorff, Ida Yoder, Lavina Slagell, Emma Roeschley, Lavina Beller, Esther Roeschley, Ida M. Conrad, Raymond Good, Roy Slagell, Jesse Schrock, Alvin Saltzman, Irvin Saltzman, Levi Stalter, Orval Stalter, Arthur Guth, Eli Roeschley, Arthur H. Augsburger, Sadie Stalter, Elmer Stalter, Willis Slagell, Emmett King, Clara Saltzman, Raymond Saltzman, Amos Slagell, and Emma Slagell. Some of the homes where the early Literary Society met were Jacob Yordy, D. W. Slagell, Joe Stalter, D. J. Augsburger, Peter Guth, Mrs. Schertz, Dan Eigsti, Joe King, Wm. Stalter, Henry Stalter, Mrs. J. Zehr, S. A. Albrecht, J. D. Hartzler, Edward Stalter and John Stalter and others. Programs given are of special significance and reveal the ingenuity of the group. Instrumental and vocal numbers, impromptu talks, readings, newspapers, an imitation of a bachelor sewing on a button, Songsters in Birdland, a whistling duet, and debates are among some of the features. Debates are of particular interest. Among subjects debated were: Revolved: "That country life is better than city life." "Which is most practical—horse or tractor farming", "Fire is more destructive

than water", "That the Average young man has better opportunities to make life a financial success this his forefathers." "Train traveling is more convenient than car traveling", and "Poultry raising is more profitable than gardening". Of course much of the evening was spent in the playing of games and visiting. The Literary Society was a very popular organization and filled a great need. At the time of the Second World War, due to gas rationing, many young men being gone, etc, the Society almost ceased. After the war a Mennonite Youth Fellowship was organized and replaced the Literary Society. The local unit is associated with the State and National Mennonite Youth Fellowship and is faithfully and energetically supported by the Young People of the church. Paul Stalter is the present president with Wesley Stalter as vice-president. Diane Long is the secretary. Song leader is Mary Roeschley. Committee responsibilities are carried by Robert Stalter, Elton Yordy and Jim Roeschley. Sponsors are the Delmar Yordys' and Chester Longs'.

Families and Names at Waldo

It is a difficult task to date the appearance of families in the Gridley area. "In the township in the south west corner of Livingston County, Waldo Township, the Germans were in the majority. Children of the German settlers around Farmsville moved here and we find the same names here as there. For instance Ehresman, Mueller, Ulrich, Neuhauser, Klopfenstein, Schlegel, Sommers, Rich, Farni, etc. New settlers from Germany also settled here such as George Wurst, Heinrich Otto, John Lukert, John Stalter (who had first lived for several years in Tazewell County) Joseph Claudon, John Christian and Jacob Koenig who came from McLean County and many others." [16] Settlers in Central Illinois by 1836 along the Illinois River include the following: David Schertz, Peter Engel, George Sommers, Peter Rocke. Along the Mackinaw we find Peter and Christ Farni, the Jehrs and Andrew Ropp. Between 1840-1855 came the Stuckeys, Ottos, Garbers, etc. Between 1848-1854 Pennsylvania furnished a number of Amish settlers which included Lantzs, Sharps, and Stutzmans. Between 1850-1860 came the Milers, Nafzigers, Redigers, Stalters, and Kennels mostly from Butler County, Ohio or direct from Europe. In 1861-1865 came the Stahleys to Livingston and McLean County." [17] The earliest existing church record contains the names of the following: Steinman, Orendorff, Slagel, Summers, Stalter, Becker, Rediger, Neuhauser, Ruvenacht, Yordy, Schertz, Conrad, Greiser, Augsburger, Good, Albrecht, Ingold, Zehr, Saltzman, Schrock, Sutter, Dellenbach, Roeschley, Beller, Eigsti, Musselman, Kauffman, Yoder, Tchaboth, Ager, Forney, Miller, Roggy, Borchirding, Resser, Ross, Hartzler, Gunden, Smith, Martin, Janskan. These names it seems are representative of the period of 1903-1913. Names represented after this period beginning in 1913 include King, Detwiller, Godwin, Birky, Deimer, Schreck, Penner, Reedy, Roth, Roszhart, Davis. This brings the record to 1923. During the next period the names of Crumrine, Lantz, Ringenberg, Rediger, Shetler, and Putney were added to the church roll. Beginning January 16, 1930 Dillman, Hill, Springer and Killingsworth became members. This was the listing until 1933 when the church was destroyed by fire. In the new church the following family names appeared on the church register book: Albrecht, Beller, Birky, Augsburger, Crumrine, Conrad, Dellenbach, Dillman, Eigsti, Greiser, Guth, Hartzler, King, Killingsworth, Nehauser, Orendorff, Roeschley, Putney, Reedy, Ringenberg, Rediger, Roggy, Roszhart, Slagel, Smith, Schertz, Schreck, Stalter, Schrock, Saltzman, Springer, Yordy, and Zehr were listed. New names added following this were Baily, Wougt, Appel, Hartman, Kenagy and Krusy. Again a new listing was started in 1937. Following this listing the names of Byler appears. A new church record book was made in 1939. Names appearing from this date until the present are Bennet, Bachman, Birky, DeWilde, Engle, Erschen, Friesen, Miller, Gundy, Hurt, Ives, Jansen,

Kenyon, Grimm, Knapp, Klopfenstein, Litwiller, Long, May, Oyer, Roth, Sutter, Roggy, Schertz, Slagell, Schrock, Weaver, Yergler.

The Church of Today

The Waldo Church and its leadership strongly interested in the contribution it can make to the lives of each member in the fellowship, of its impact and influence in the community for its betterment and for the gospel ministry to all peoples for the Glory of the Lord. The church is fortunate to have as Pastor Emeritus, J. D. Hartzler with mature Christian conviction. The church council acts chiefly as an advisory group to the church pastor and to the congregation. When the church pastor does not act as chairman of this council meeting, the chairman from the congregation itself chairs the meeting. The present chairman is Homer Springer, Robert Slagell serves as secretary of the council and treasurer of the church. Other members are Floyd Hartzler, Sunday School superintendent; Arthur Ringenberg of trustees; Virgil May as superintendent of the Sunday evening services; Lyle Sutter elected member by the congregation and Milo Zehr and Homer Springer, members of the Illinois Mennonite Conference. Church Trustees are Lloyd Zehr, chairman: Edd Stalter, Secretary-Treasurer; and Arthur Ringenberg. Floyd Hartzler is the Sunday School Superintendent with Chester Long as assistant. Royce Engel is Song leader. Harold Grimm serves as Sunday School treasurer. The Sunday School library, an effective educational tool and adequately expanding, has Verelda Roth as librarian with Emma Roeschley and Wayne Schertz as assistants. Velda Reedy had helped a great deal in library work. The Children's Activities Committee is composed of Aldine Hartzler, chairman; Beulah Roeschley, assistant; and Esther Stalter as Secretary. Oscar Roth directs the Sunday morning music activities with Royce Engel and Roy Roeschley helping him as members of the music committee. The Church Extension Committee personnel are Roland Stalter, chairman; Richard Zehr; Roger Gundy; and Floyd Hartzler. Members of the Relief Committee are Louis Bachman, Harvey Stalter, Melvin Roeschley, Paul Hartzler and Silas Birky. The girl's leaders for Wayfarers are Dora Schertz, Oleta Hartzler, and Evelyn May. Roger Gundy leads the boy's Torchbearer's group. Church ushers are Jim Roeschley and Paul Stalter. Roy Roeschley serves as Senior Usher. An active Mennonite Service organization exists with Lyle Sutter as the chairman; Roland Stalter, Secretary-Treasurer; and Virgil May. The Sunday evening chairman is Virgil May, Richard Zehr, Assistant and Wayne Schertz as song leader. Edwin J. Stalter is the church pastor.

Service Contributions from Waldo

Although all of the Amish Mennonite settlers did not remain or affiliate at the first location, yet through the establishment of other churches an adequate group of individuals now comprise four Mennonite churches in the area. The Meadows Home for the Aged and the Salem Children's Home are serving in the name of Christ to those who have need of these facilities. In the church at Waldo itself, mention cannot be made of all who have made constructive service to mankind but of the many would be included the name of Arthur Slagel who served in foreign relief to Russia following the first World War. William Albrecht became a world known Soil Scientist. William Schertz has been the supervisor of the Waldo Township. Many years of service was given by Samuel Albrecht in connection with Mennonite Hospital at Bloomington. Noah Roeschley has served as pastor at Cullom, Morton, and in Peoria. J. W. Davis from Waldo, was pastor at Cullom also for some time. Voluntary Service participants in recent years have been Delmar and Esther Yordy at La Junta, Colorado: Wilma Roeschley in La Junta, Colorado. Herbert Yordy in Kansas City, Kansas; Wayne and Agnes Schertz in Germany and Jordan; Elizabeth Albrecht for Mennonite

Broadcasts, Harrisonburg, Virginia and Leland Stalter in South America. Others have served shorter periods. Through the years, various musical groups have been prominent. May Orendorff organized and directed a ladies chorus. Wilma Roeschley had a junior girl's chorus. In earlier years a girl's quartet, a men's quartet and also a men's octet came from the Roeschley family. In recent years the Messenger's Quartet have sung in many sections of Central Illinois. A Mennonite choir with the Mennonite churches of Meadows, Salem, Flanagan and Waldo have sung a number of times under the direction of Oscar Roth.

The Challenge of Tomorrow

For one-hundred years the Mennonites have lived in the area of Waldo. From beginnings of uncertainty to the security of the present, the hand of God has been evident. What of the tomorrow? Of course, no one can be sure, but we must accept its challenge. Today we are securely united in a homeland. A home base is ours. May we use these blessings for the purpose of evangelism in Waldo, Livingston County, Illinois and the entire earth. The predominate emphasis of the Old Testament, the Life of our Lord, the New Testament and that of the Christian Church is the message that God loves all peoples and desires them all in the flock as His children. The Anabaptist beginnings of our church were saturated in this climate. May the church of Waldo be in the stream of continuity with the message and love of our Lord in its community and to all men.

> "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
>
> Revelation 22:14

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9. *Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary* p. 239 Mennonite Publishing House
10. Weaver—*Ibid p.* 43 49
11. *History of Livingston County* 1878
12. Ibid
13. *Herald of Truth* 1872 p. 62
14. *Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary*
15. Weber Ibid
16. *Alte Deutsche Ansiedler in Woodford and McLean County*—H. E. Sieberns
17. Weaver—Ibid

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Smith, The Mennonites.
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Records of church membership of Waldo Mennonites.
Manuscripts—The Mennonites of McLean County—George L. Kirchner.
History of the Waldo Mennonite Church—Mary Greiser.
A History of the Waldo Mennonite Congregation—Burdell Roeschley.
Brief History of Salem Mennonite Church—Christian Egle.
Gridley Centennial Book
Some Material was quoted and taken from the work of the church historian, Emma Roeschley.

Homestead of Jacob and Magdalena Saltzman. Pictures taken 1900 notice Grandpa and Grandma house to the left.

Homestead of Christian Slagel, D. W. Slagel was born here March 26, 1864.

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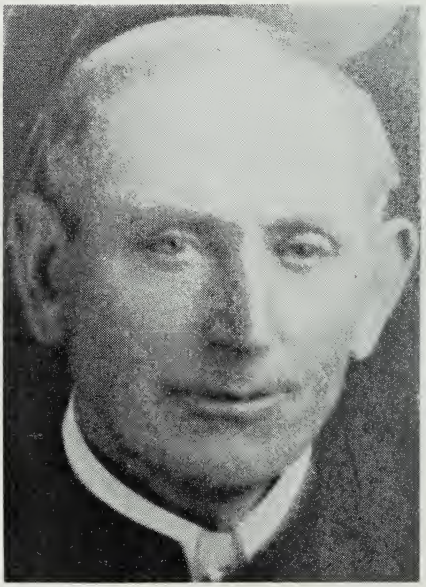
John P. Schmitt and wife

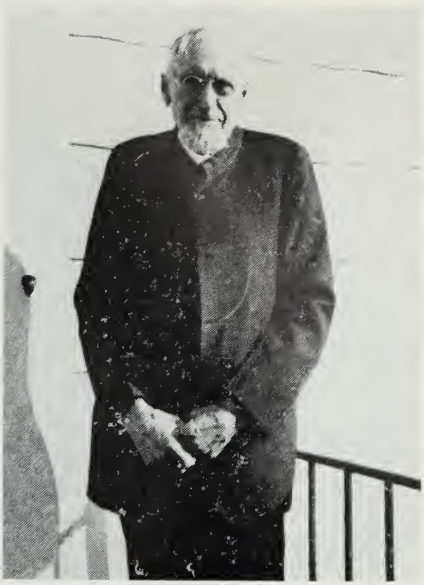
Daniel Stiemman
1830-1916

John Albrecht
Barbara Nafziger Albrecht



George Summers
1871-1937

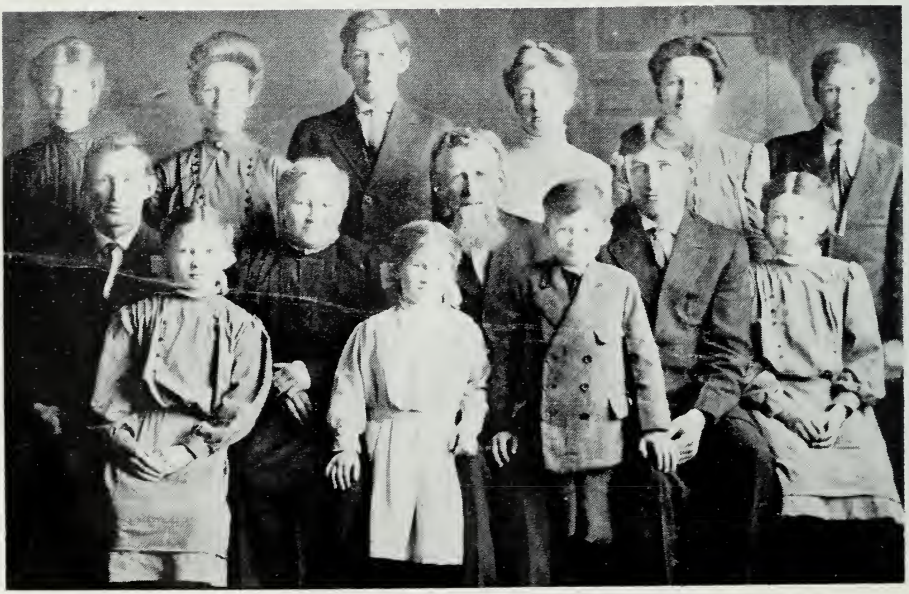
Dan Orendorf and wife.



Daniel Slagel
1864-1947

Waldo church burns 1933.

Waldo Mennonite church before fire of 1933.



Front row: Edd, Edna, Grandma, Emma, Grandpa, Amsy, Noah and Minnie. Back row: Lucy, Hattie, Bill, Mabel, Ida, Raymond.

Front row: Art Zehr, Eli Roeschly Alfred Roeschely. Back row: Milo Zehr, Elmer Schrock.

Christian and Mary B. King

Edward Rediger
1876-1943

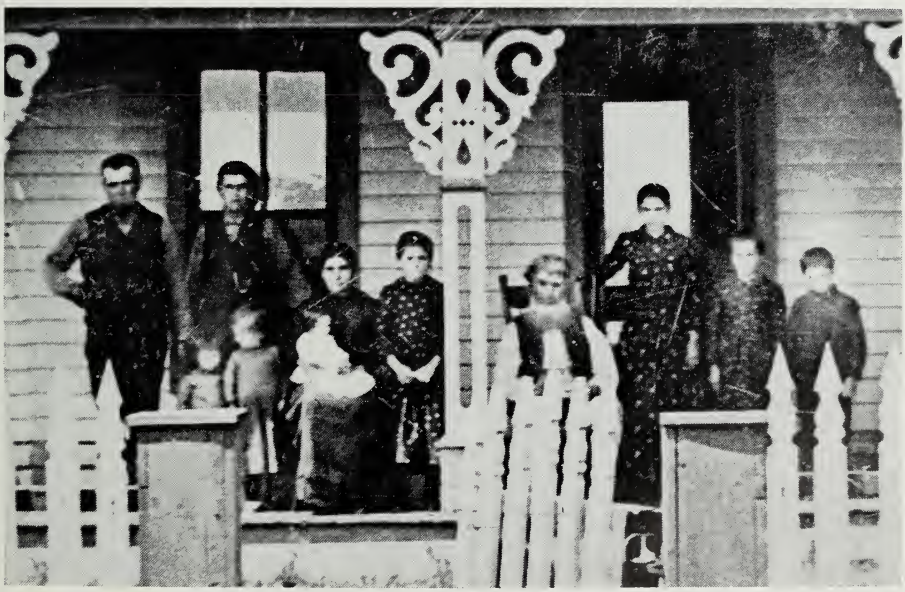
J. D. and Emma Hartzler

Peter M. Shertz
1856-1913

Front row: Maude Yordy, Anna Schertz, Lucy Slagel, Ida Yordy, Lydia Slagell, Lydia Orendorff. Second row: Edd Yordy, Adda Fosdick, Emma Hartzler, Frank Eicher, Barbara Zehr, Mattie Shertz. Third row: Charles Fosdick, Joe Orendorff, Gus Grieser, John Kaiser, Will Shertz.

John Stalter 1813-1897, and his wife. He came to this country in 1853 and to Livingston County in 1860.

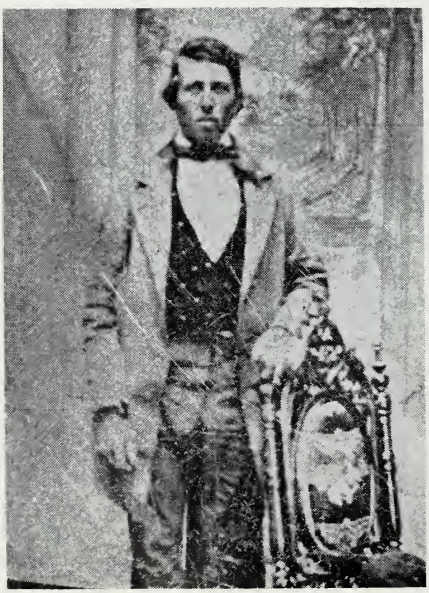
Christina Eicher Stalter
1843-1875



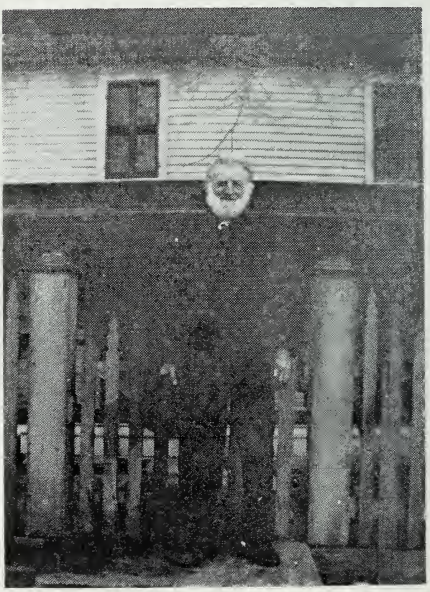
John Beller Simon Beller Lena B. Barbara B. (Mary Mother holding child Emma) (Lizzie beside Mother) (Grandpa John Forney) Katie Mary Jacob.

Bertha Zehr and Elizabeth Roeschley

Catherine Wyse Stahley Stremman and daughter Bertha Zehr.



Christ Stahley born 1835



Daniel Stalter
1843-1930

Henry Stalter 1872-1957
Mary, his wife, 1873-1921

Jacob and Kathryn (Grieser) Stalter and sons Joseph and Jacob.

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